



Gardeners Helping Gardeners Succeed

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All About Drought Tolerant Plants

Drought Evasive

Plants that have the ability to adapt to environmental stresses and maximize growth. These plants usually lose a number of leaves when the summer heat begins. Example: Rugosa Rose, Lilac, and Poplars.

Drought Tolerant

A plant that maximizes efficiency of water use and survives in less than typical precipitation amounts in any given region. These plants may completely defoliate with a lack of water yet re-grow a second set of leaves when regular watering resumes. Example: Ash, Privet, Sumac, and Quince.

Drought Resistant

Plants that have developed strategies to withstand long periods with little or no water—the plants have relatively low water requirements. Example: Junipers, Pines, Yucca, Fernbush, and Apache Plume.

Drought tolerant and drought resistant are often used interchangeably.

Characteristics of the many aforementioned plants have:

- Thick leaves
- Waxy coated leaves
- Hairy leaves
- Silvery/grayish foliage
- Narrow leaves
- Prickly leaves

Key characteristics that are commonly looked at when the health of ones' landscape is desired, have helped dictate the following list:

1. Moderate to high drought tolerance
2. Aesthetically pleasing
3. Easy maintenance
4. Availability
5. Usually well established after one year of regular scheduled watering
6. Weekly watering with a drip system often 2 hours when young and up to 8 hours when the planting has been in 10 years or so. This encourages good healthy growth, reduces stress, and allows a healthy living environment.

Low Water Use Plants

Deciduous Shrubs

Low Water use

Antelope Brush	Purshia tridentate
Apache Plume	Fallugia paradoxa
Beautybush	Kolkwitzia amabilis
Buffaloberry, Silver	Shepherdia argentea
Butterfly Bush	Buddleia 'Argentea'
Butterfly Bush	Buddleia davidii
Broom	Cytisus
Chaste Tree	Vitex agnus-castus
Cliffrose	Cowania Mexicana
Currant, Golden	Ribes aureum
Currant, Wax	Ribes cereum
Fernbush	Chamaebatiaria millefolium
Honeysuckle, Arnold Red	Lonicera tartarica
Leadplant	Amorpha canescens
Lilac	Syringa
Mockorange, Littleleaf	Philadelphus microphyllus
Mountain Mahogany	Cercocarpus montanus
Cutleaf	Cercocarpus ledifolius
Hairy	Cercocarpus brevifolius
Littleleaf	Cercocarpus intricatus
Peashrub	Caragana arborescens
Privet	Ligustrum vulgare
Privet	Forestiera neomexicana
Rabbitbrush	Chrysothamnus
Rose, Wood's	Rosa woodsii
Sage, Russian	Perovskia atriplicifolia
Sagebush	Artemisia cana
Big Sage	Artemisia tridentate
	Artemisia canescens
Saltbush, Four-Wing	Atriplex canescens
Sandcherry	Prunus besseyi
Silverberry	Elaeagnus commutate
Spiraea, Blue	Caryopteris clandonensis
St. Johnswort	Hypericum frondosum
Sumac	Rhus typhina
	Rhus aromatica
	Rhus glabra
	Rhus trilobata
	Rhus lanceolate
Woadwaxen	Genista tinctorial
Yucca, Red	Hesperaloe
Yucca, Adam's Needle	Yucca filamentosa

Moderately Low Water Use

Barberry	Berberis thunbergii
Barberry	Berberis mentorensis
Buckthorn	Rhamnus frangula
Cherry, Nanking	Prunus tomentosa
Coralberry	Symphoricarpos
Cotoneaster	Cotoneaster apiculatus
	Cotoneaster perpusillus
	Cotoneaster lucidus
	Cotoneaster acutifolia
	Cotoneaster horizontalis
Currant	Ribes alpinus
Gooseberry	Ribes uva-crispa
Lilac	Syringa chinensis
Lilac	Syringa patula
Maple	Acer ginnala
Ninebark	Physocarpus opulifolius
Potentilla	Potentilla fruticosa
Quince	Chaenomeles
Snowberry, White	Symphoricarpos albus
Spiraea, False	Sorbaria sorbifolia
Viburnum, Alleghany	Viburnum rhytidophylloides
Viburnum, Mohican	Viburnum lantana
Viburnum, Nannyberry	Viburnum lentago

Deciduous Trees

Low Water Use

Hackberry	<i>Celtis occidentalis</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus crus-galli</i>
Kentucky Coffee	<i>Gymnocladus dioicus</i>
Lilac, Japanese Tree	<i>Syringa reticulata</i>
Locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>
Oak, Bur	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>
Oak Gambel	<i>Quercus gambelii</i>
Pear, Flowering	<i>Pyrus calleryana</i>
Walnut, Black	<i>Juglans nigra</i>
Russian Olive	<i>Eleagnus angustifolia</i>

Evergreen Shrubs & Trees

Low Water Use

Cedar, Blue Atlas	<i>Cedrus atlantica</i>
Cypress, Arizona	<i>Cupressus arizonica</i>
Juniper	<i>Juniperus</i> spp.
Pine, Bristlecone	<i>Pinus aristata</i>
Pine, Bristlecone	<i>Pinus longaeava</i>
Pine, Eastern	<i>Pinus strobus</i>
Pine, Jeffrey	<i>Pinus jeffreyi</i>
Pine, Limber	<i>Pinus flexilis</i>
Pine, Pinon	<i>Pinus monophylla</i>
Pine, Pinyon	<i>Pinus edulis</i>
Pine, Ponderosa	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>

Moderately Low Water Use

Pine, Austrian	<i>Pinus nigra</i>
Pine, Japanese White	<i>Pinus parviflora</i>
Pine, Scotch	<i>Pinus Sylvestris</i>
Spruce, Colorado	<i>Picea pungens</i>
Spruce, Black Hills	<i>Picea densata</i>

Moderately Low Water Use

Apple	<i>Malus</i>
Ash, Green	<i>Fraxinus pennsylvanica</i>
Buckeye, Ohio	<i>Aesculus glabra</i>
Catalpa, Western	<i>Catalpa speciosa</i>
Crabapple	<i>Malus</i>
Elm	<i>Ulmus</i>
Golden Raintree	<i>Koelreuteria paniculata</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus phaenopyrum</i>
Honeylocust	<i>Gleditsia triacanthos</i>
Horsechestnut	<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>
Japanese Pagoda	<i>Sophora japonica</i>
Maple	<i>Acer tataricum</i>
Maple	<i>Acer grandidentatum</i>
Oak, English	<i>Quercus robur</i>
Oak, Swamp	<i>Quercus bicolor</i>
Oak, White	<i>Quercus alba</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier grandiflora</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier canadensis</i>
Seven-son flower	<i>Heptacodium</i>
Zelkova	<i>Zelkova serrata</i>

Grasses

Low Water Use

Little Bluestem	<i>Schizachyrium scoparium</i>
Karl Foerster	<i>Calamagrostis acutiflora</i>
Mexican Feather	<i>Nasella tenuissima</i> (formerly: <i>Stipa</i>)
Deergrass	<i>Muhlenbergia rigens</i>
Indiangrass	<i>Sorghastrum nutans</i>
Mosquito Grass	<i>Citronella</i>